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In this issue of *From Evidence to Action*, we look at the arts and culture sector in South Africa, and the critical role it can play in the development of the country, from economic to skills development, tourism to job creation. In our feature article, we find out about the Southern African Theatre Initiative (SATI) series of provincial indabas and why this consultative process was so important. Continuing this focus on consultation, we also present several toolkits for improving public participation in our Tools section. We examine the crucial role networks can play for development and training in the arts and culture sector in our case study on the National Community Theatre for Education and Development (NACTED) and our Spotlight on the Arterial Network, which seeks to promote and develop the arts in Africa. Finally, our Resources section is packed with information about what is going on currently in policy and legislation, recent reports and relevant links.

From Evidence to Action aims to stimulate debate around evidence-based policy-making. If you have anything to contribute towards getting research into policy, and policy into action, whether successful or unsuccessful, please send your submissions to vfichardt@hsrc.ac.za.

Community consultation on policy – will it lead to change?

The Southern African Theatre Initiative (SATI)

Since 1994, the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) has developed policies to transform the sector as part of its vision to preserve South African culture and ensure cohesion and nation building. Interventions made by the department have been at policy and implementation level, as well as funding and the development of infrastructure. However, the process of transformation was slow and there were many issues that needed to be addressed to ensure growth, development and sustainability within the various arts disciplines.

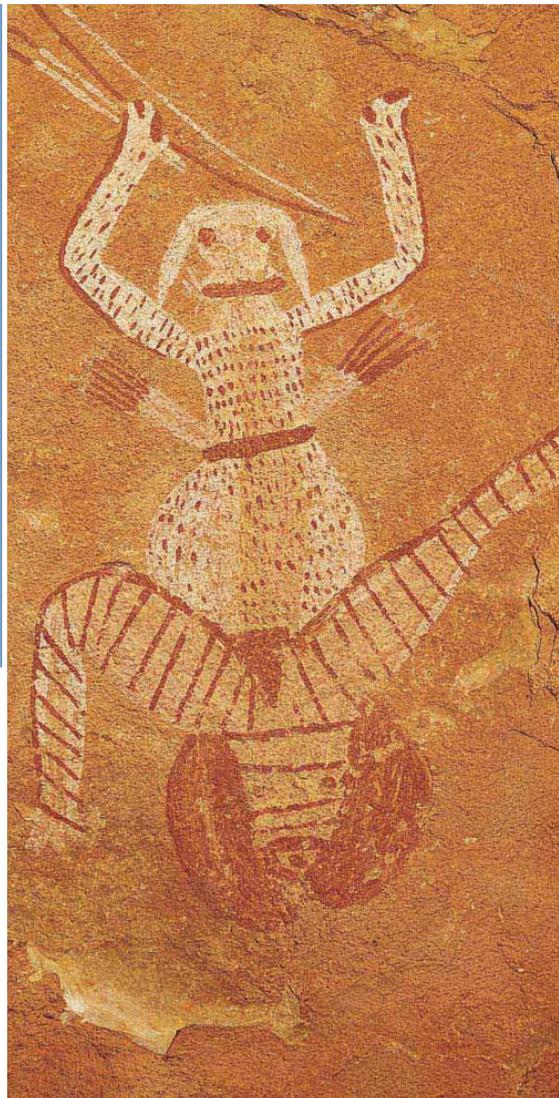
In early 2008, therefore, Mpho Molepo, Director of the Southern African Theatre Initiative (SATI), approached the Department with an interesting proposition: to convene a series of provincial indabas for theatre and dance practitioners, where key

policy issues could be discussed as part of a national consultative process supported by DAC. These indabas have now been completed in all nine provinces and *From Evidence to Action* thought it would be interesting to take a look at the process and the key policy issues arising from it.

“One of the achievements of the SATI indabas is that they created an opportunity for artists in the province to meet with provincial government to address issues around the policy and financing of the arts in the province,” explains Bobby Rodwell, facilitator of the SATI indabas.

“They brought together a really wide range of people – including community theatre workers, professional actors and dancers, government, theatre managers, cultural institutions and NGOS – to talk about what enables and disables people from carrying

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out their craft and how national policy and funding processes impact on artists in the field. But the SATI process was not only about giving people a chance to engage with the officials in the arts and culture departments in their provinces, it also allowed civil society within the theatre and dance sector to meet and network.”

This consultative approach at community level is of particular interest in light of DAC’s recently released Mzansi Golden Economy (<http://www.info.gov.za/view/DownloadFileAction?id=146493>), which reflects the growing recognition of the importance of arts and culture for economic growth. “The Mzansi Golden Economy is being championed by the Minister of Arts and Culture, Paul Mashatile. Its core objective is the need for transformation across the sector, including the need for the sector’s economic value to be enumerated. The sector itself is central to developing the Mzansi Golden Economy, and for this reason it is important that discussions and debates held in the SATI indaba process are robust so that government is able to

understand the realities on the ground,” explains Collen Hlatshwayo, Deputy Director: Performing Arts-Technology (Events and Technical Services).

The approach was first conceptualised about four years ago and arose out of the understanding that the arts community needed further redress and that policies that were in place did not always fulfil that mandate. It is only by contributing to the policy process that service delivery can be improved. If the sector participates it will be part of the process and can raise its voice when necessary. “Activism is important so that the sector can mobilise itself. Artists must claim their space as SATI has done and contribute to the professionalisation of the sector,” emphasises Hlatshwayo.

that this national conversation leads to a new role for the performing arts in society. Participation of artists across the country is critical and this process has already begun through the provincial indabas, which served as an important research function for DAC as well. The aim of the process was to not only help quantify and map out what is available in terms of individual and organisational capacity, but also to make clear recommendations to DAC that could inform policy and interventions towards further development in the arts and culture sectors.

The indabas are being followed up with individual interviews and desk top research by the research team and there are still plans for the provincial task teams, elected



In the past, the arts appear to have been dissociated from key national development processes and what is important now is

at each provincial indaba, to take the proposals coming out of the provincial indabas forward at a national indaba. **From**

“It is important that this series of indabas leads to valuable outcomes. At least some of the problems experienced in the process arise from political changes and new appointments in the department. SATI has shown great commitment over this period and an accurate account of the process will be of great assistance to government,”





Evidence to Action will continue to monitor this process.

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arise from political changes and new appointments in the department. SATI has shown great commitment over this period and an accurate account of the process will be of great assistance to government,” says Hlatshwayo. “What remains important

is that the sector empowers itself and unites, rather than competing with one another. Practitioners need a strong voice and should focus on advancing themselves, rather than only looking to government for support.”

Recommendations coming out of the SATI indabas

In general there was a very positive spirit regarding the SATI indaba process and an acknowledgment that theatre practitioners themselves have to take action and not simply criticise DAC and the main funding body, the National Arts Council. The sector should assist DAC to make more funding available from Treasury and to make information available to the sector regarding access to funding, training, performance spaces, and so forth. At each of the indabas, priority areas were discussed and recommendations proposed. Some common themes to emerge include:

- The sector should be better organised and become more pro-active. However, in general the lack of sufficient funding to the sector is the single most debilitating factor, as it affects training, skills capacity, access to spaces to perform, etc.
- The performing arts will always need to be subsidised by government – while self-sustainability is an important aim for any practitioner, there is a danger in assuming that the performing arts will ever be fully sustainable. It is very important for government to support artists because they contribute to tourism and the GDP, job creation and skills development.
- Networks are important to mobilise around policy issues, share information and strengthen access to funding, as well build relationships with local government and the private sector. They can also serve a critical role in creating capacity-building platforms.
- Information sharing is crucial, including guidelines from government on funding structures, procedures and criteria, and information about funding opportunities.
- Lobbying and advocacy needs to be strengthened in the sector.
- Effective organisational structures and processes should be put in place so that there is, for example, transparency and accountability on funding projects and expenditure.
- DAC needs to focus on development by, for example, making sure there is a developmental programme across the sector, that money goes to artists and not to department-initiated projects, and that artists receive training in funding and sustainability.
- The private sector also needs to get involved, particularly for better sustainability.
- Festivals and venues are important and should be controlled by artists.
- Policies and founding documents should be reviewed and more conducive policies developed.
- The status of artists and art forms needs to be raised.
- There needs to be effective marketing and publicity for arts.
- There needs to be continual training and capacity-building throughout the sector.

Relevant policy and legislation

Cultural institutions Act

<http://www.dac.gov.za/acts/a119-98.pdf>

Mzansi Golden Economy strategy

<http://www.info.gov.za/view/DownloadFileAction?id=146493>

National Arts Council Act

http://www.dac.gov.za/acts/a56-97_2.pdf

Public Finance Management Act

<http://www.info.gov.za/view/DownloadFileAction?id=179567>

White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage

http://www.dac.gov.za/white_paper.htm





CASE STUDY:

NACTED – an arts activist network

The National Community Theatre for Education and Development (NACTED) network was initiated in 1993 by a group of cultural NGOs concerned that, while there was a large pre-1994 drive to develop new policy within arts and culture, there was not sufficient engagement with community theatre workers.

Founder members, the Performing Arts Workers' Equity (PAWE), Market Theatre Laboratory, Handspring Trust, Maluti Players and Akanani Rural Development Association, arranged a conference to present the idea of starting a network of community theatre workers.

“The idea behind NACTED was to build a network that would focus on capacity-building and training, as well as to en-

community theatre workers from across the country.

NACTED's organisational strategy was to invite community theatre workers from around the country to week-long conferences that functioned as training and networking opportunities. Training included management, financial and fundraising skills, as well as workshops in various performing arts disciplines, from puppetry to

political and social voice during the struggle and was ‘theatre made for the community by the community’,” says Rodwell. “There were hundreds of small groups across the country but one of the key concerns was that they did not necessarily have access to funding, venues, festivals and so forth. It was therefore important to establish a network through which community theatre groups could have agency and engage in the critical policy processes that were going on at the time.”



gage in policy development, so that in the future, the sector could benefit from new and progressive policy and funding,” explains Bobby Rodwell, one of the founder members, and former Board member of NACTED. In 1994, NACTED was officially launched in Bloemfontein by more than 100

poetry. Information was also made available on festivals, funding and training opportunities.

“NACTED gave new breath to what was a very powerful movement in the 1970s and 1980s. Community theatre gave people a

Developing a network in the early 1990s was no easy task, given that there were no cell phones, email or internet – communication tools that most networks rely on completely to operate today. “It was very difficult getting hold of people, and this was perhaps the most challenging aspect for the network,” says Rodwell, explaining that many people did not have a landline and to invite someone to a conference, for example, could involve phoning many people and asking them to travel significant distances in order to take a message through about the conference. “Now it would be so much easier because almost all South Africans have their own cell phones – one could simply send an sms.”

However, NACTED did still manage to play a significant role in developing and distributing training material, mainly through the conferences, but also through the postal service. This was very important, as there

was not a lot of training material easily accessible then. NACTED was able to engage in policy processes as an organisation, to ensure that the voice of the community theatre sector was represented, by attending conferences and workshops around the drafting of the White Paper on Arts and Culture.

NACTED was active for 10 years – a very good lifespan for a network, the average cycle being about five to six years, but particularly for one involved in such a transient industry with so much movement. Even today NACTED still has a very strong identity, and this was one of its key successes, along with its credibility and agency, two other essential ingredients for a network to succeed.

“Networks are incredibly important spaces for people to come together, not only to develop skills, and grow as leaders, but

also to galvanise people’s ideas and energies into clear activities, policies and campaigns that benefit individuals and the sector as a whole,” explains Rodwell. “But looking back, we can see that NACTED’s major area of weakness was in fact around policy development, the reason why the network came into being in the first place,” says Rodwell. “There was a tendency for us to remain a radical voice on the side. The limited skills level was also a problem, and the reason why we focused mainly on capacity-building. We had very few people in the network who were skilled in policy development and it was a struggle to keep up with policy processes taking place at the time. This is a great pity as ultimately a lot of the policy that was implemented after 1994 has not suited the sector.”

Sadly, in the end, the lack of sufficient funding, management and the capacity to keep it going, as well as the fact that the sector

on the whole was so thin on infrastructure, saw the fading out of this influential and iconic network. Even though NACTED operated in a specific period of time, Rodwell believes that the network still has a place today. “There are quite a lot of networks at the moment, but they are not necessarily geared towards this sector or concentrate on theatre for development or theatre for social change,” says Rodwell.

“Theatre has a crucial role to play in terms of development, today as much as in the early 1990s, and there is still a need to foster this industry and build its capacity. Theatre is also an incredible tool for social cohesion and economic development. NACTED tried to give a bold message about the importance of maintaining theatre at local and provincial level and to recognise its potential, but if it is not properly supported, it will not flourish.”





SPOTLIGHT ON:

The Arterial Network: promoting the African arts agenda

The Arterial Network started as a dynamic, continent-wide network of non-government organisations, creative industry companies, festivals and individual artists engaged in the African creative sector at a conference, Revitalising Africa's Cultural Assets, in March 2007.

Its vision is of a vibrant, dynamic and sustainable African creative civil society sector engaged in qualitative practice in the arts in their own right, as well as in a manner that contributes to development, to human rights and democracy, and to the eradication of poverty on the African continent.

In the context of the conditions on the African continent, its vision and understanding of development and the cultural dimension of development, the Arterial Network aims to:

- Build and/or further develop effective, sustainable national, regional and continental networks within and across arts disciplines to play advocacy and lobbying roles within countries, regions, on the continent and internationally as appropriate, and in support of the African creative sector.
- Collect and distribute relevant information, data and documents to empower civil society arts and culture organisations in African countries and regions to plan and take informed action in their interests.
- Provoke debate, discussions and theorising around arts, culture, creative industries and contemporary arts and culture discourses and to develop African positions and leadership on such issues.
- Help to build national, regional, continental and international circuits (festivals, outlets, etc) to distribute African cultural goods and services and enable

African artists to tour their works and to generate income through their creative output.

- Facilitate the training and development of human resources required to practice, distribute and market the arts and creative goods and services of the African continent.
- Mobilise local, regional, continental and international resources in support of the development, promotion and distribution of African creative goods and services.
- Improve the working and living conditions and defend the rights of artists

and creative practitioners on the African continent.

At its second biennial meeting in Johannesburg, September 2009, attended by 132 delegates from 28 African countries, a decision was taken to build a more formal network which led to the adoption of a constitutional framework, the election of a 10-person Steering Committee (two per African region), the appointment or election of 28 country representatives and the adoption of strategic priorities for the next 3-5 years.



The Arterial Network provides regular newsletters, blogs and membership services. For more information, visit its website at www.arterialnetwork.org.

TOOLS:

Public participation

Our feature article focused on an extensive consultation process about policy in the arts and culture sector through the SATI provincial indabas. A national indaba will be convened at a later date where final recommendations will be formulated for discussions with government. Public consultation is important in policy development processes and a recent study, conducted by the Public Service Commission (www.info.gov.za/view/DownloadFileAction?id=108154) assesses public participation practices in selected departments in the public service.

Against this background we have selected various toolkits for improving public participation: the first is aimed at municipal staff and elected officials; the second provides guidelines for convening community dialogues; the third provides information for community-based organisations aiming to influence policy; and the fourth presents information on monitoring government policies.

A 'tool kit' to support public participation in local governance

<http://devplan.kzntl.gov.za/ASALGP/Resources/Documents/Public%20Participation%20Tool%20Kit.pdf>

A tool box containing the tools municipal staff and elected officials can use to include the community in their decisions. All the ideas and suggested ways of communicating and working with the public were tested in the region where consultations took place.

A toolkit for community dialogues

http://www.idasa.org/media/uploads/outputs/files/community_dialogue.pdf

This toolkit provides basic steps for community participation to fully engage in school governance and community participation processes.

Policy engagement: How civil society can be more effective

<http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/docs/200.pdf>

The aim of the report is to show why evidence matters for community service organisations' work in international development and presents strategic and practical advice regarding how they can ensure their policy engagement is more effective, influential and sustained.

Monitoring government policies: A toolkit for civil society organisations in Africa

<http://www.ebpdn.org/resource/resource.php?lang=en&id=320>

The aim of this toolkit is to offer information, ideas, examples and methods on how to gather evidence about policies *where you are* – and to use that evidence to press for change. It provides the opportunity to develop your own approach by selecting and customising the tools you find most appropriate for your circumstances.

Resources

Links

Archival Platform

www.archivalplatform.org

A networking, advocacy and research initiative, referring not only to archives and libraries, but also to memory, cultural practice and places that tell the stories of the past. It aims to facilitate dialogue and information sharing between professionals, academics and government employees in the heritage and archive sector.

Art Moves Africa (AMA)

www.artmovesafrica.org

An international non-profit organisation aiming to facilitate cultural and artistic exchanges in Africa. AMA offers travel funds to artists, arts professionals and cultural operators living and working in Africa to travel within Africa to engage in the exchange of information, the enhancement of skills, develop informal networks and build cooperation.

Creative Africa

www.creative-africa.org/CREATIVE-AFRICA_2008/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=49&Itemid=109

Designed by Agoralumiere, the Creative Africa Initiative aims to fit in the African Union's priorities as an African strategy to contribute to the implementation of the AU New Plan of Action for the development of cultural and creative industries at the continental, regional, national and local levels in concrete and measurable ways.

Links continued

Department of Arts and Culture (DAC)

www.dac.gov.za/contacts.htm

DAC aims to ensure a supportive and enabling environment for the growth and development of the arts and culture sector in South Africa and fulfilling its vision of an arts, culture and heritage sector that contributes significantly to social cohesion, nation building and economic empowerment.

NESTA

<http://www.nesta.org.uk/home1>

Nesta is an independent charity with a mission to help people and organisations bring ideas to life. It does this by providing investments and grants and mobilising research, networks and skills. Nesta works in partnership with other innovators, community organisations, educators and investors.

Observatory of Cultural Policies in Africa (OCPA)

<http://www.ocpanet.org/>

An independent pan-African non-governmental organisation aiming to enhance the development of national cultural policies in the region and their integration in human development through advocacy and information exchange, research, capacity-building and cooperation at regional and international level. Download African cultural information from its resource centre at www.culturelink.org/ocpa.

Reports

Analysing and measuring social inclusion in a global context

www.un.org/esa/socdev/publications/measuring-social-inclusion.pdf

United Nations guiding framework for policy-makers, researchers and practitioners interested in developing practical tools for evidence-based policy-making, impact assessment and monitoring and evaluation in the area of social inclusion.

Contemporary arts and culture discourse: African perspectives

www.artsinafrica.com/uploads/2011/07/African_persepectives_e-book-1.pdf

This book is the result of a series of monthly seminars and reading group discussions, organised and conducted by the Arterial Network in 2010. The purpose of the series is to encourage rigorous engagement with debates relating to culture and cultural development, often emanating from beyond Africa, that concern the priorities, strategies, practices and allocation of resources as they affect the African creative sector.

Cultural industries, arts, culture and creative arts: Towards an understanding of the current nature and scope of the creative industries in the Western Cape

www.westerncape.gov.za/other/2005/11/final_first_paper_cultural_industries_printing.pdf

This document is part of a research process commissioned by the Department of Economic Development and Tourism in the Western Cape to assess the status quo and the potential impact of the creative industries within the provincial economy, with a view to making policy and strategic interventions that would result in the Western Cape becoming the centre of the creative industries in the country.

Discussion document: a national strategy for developing an inclusive and a cohesive South African society

www.info.gov.za/events/2012/social_cohesion.html

This discussion document responds to the ongoing and unfinished national project which began with the transformation of South Africa into a constitutional democracy in 1994 – this being the building of a just society which upholds and embodies the principles and values of an inclusive, non-racial democracy.

Gauteng's creative industries: An analysis

www.britishcouncil.org/files/Low%20resolution%20pdfs/Methodology%20with%20all%20sectors/Methodology%20low%20all%20sectors%20spreads.pdf

The Gauteng Creative Mapping Project (GCMP) was implemented by the Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation in order to quantify the contribution of the creative industries to the Gauteng economy. A secondary aim was to gather information on perceived needs and obstacles to ensure the alignment of policy and programmes to the needs of the sector.

Reports continued

Innovation in Arts and Cultural Organisations

www.nesta.org.uk/publications/reports/assets/features/innovation_in_arts_and_cultural_organisations_-_interim_report

In most industries, including the creative sector, innovation is key to gaining competitive advantage and enhancing growth prospects in difficult times. But for cultural institutions, the meaning of concepts such as competitive advantage, product development, business models and so on which are so familiar in the business world need a fresh interpretation. This research aims to develop an economic analysis of innovation that is applicable to a range of cultural institutions and draws heavily on experimental case studies with two of the UK's premier national cultural institutions, the National Theatre and the Tate.

The creative industries in South Africa

www.labour.gov.za/downloads/documents/research-documents/Creative%20Industries_DoL_Report.pdf

The Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa (ASGISA) has identified the creative industries, and particularly the craft and film sectors, as one of the drivers of sustainable economic opportunities and livelihoods for local communities whilst expanding business opportunities for small, medium and micro enterprise (SMMEs). The recognition of the creative industries in the ASGISA programme is a direct result of the ongoing efforts of the Department of Arts and Culture to remedy the neglect of this important sector from mainstream trade and industry policy.

The impact of culture on creativity

www.keanet.eu/en/impactcreativityculture.html

The study illustrates the impact of culture in the development of new products, services and processes, driving technological innovation, stimulating research, optimising human resources, branding and communicating values, inspiring people to learn and building communities. It develops the concept of culture-based creativity to characterise creativity that stems from art and cultural production activities.



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